

210-212 West Henry Street
Savannah Victorian Historic District
Savannah
Chatham County
Georgia

GA-1169 H

HABS,
GA,
26-SAV,
53H-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SAVANNAH VICTORIAN HISTORIC DISTRICT

210-212 WEST HENRY STREET

HABS No. GA-1169H

Location: 210-212 West Henry Street, north side of street,
Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia.

Present Owner: Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation Project, P.O.
Box 8801, Savannah, Georgia 31412 (1979).

Present Use: Rental housing.

Significance: This is an example of an attached double tenement,
originally constructed as two single-family dwellings,
now being restored as part of Savannah Landmark's
rehabilitation program to produce low-cost rental
housing in Savannah's Victorian District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1883. Between 1879 and 1883 the lots were valued at \$100 with no improvements listed in the Tax Assessment Book. George O. Penton had purchased the lots in 1878 from Deborah A. Williamson and in September, 1883, he mortgaged lot 93 with the Jasper Mutual Loan Association. The 1884 Tax Assessment book lists improvements for both lots, each valued at \$665.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original owner: George O. Penton, an agent for the Singer Manufacturing Company. The lot was originally located in the Frew and Webb development of Oglethorpe town, one of the first developments in the Victorian District. The property is now lot 93 and part of lot 95, Gue Ward.
4. Alterations and additions: The two houses were built as single-family dwellings and remained so until ca. 1916. Early twentieth century Sanborn Insurance Maps show that a one-story bath was added to the rear of each dwelling between 1898 and 1916. The one-story rear porch was built up to the second story, and had been enclosed by 1945. Between 1916 and 1945 the houses were converted into apartments. During this conversion the rear section of the first-floor hallways were closed off from the front part.

For background information see Savannah Victorian Historic District, HABS No. GA-1169.

B. Bibliography:

Sanborn Insurance Maps of Savannah, 1898 and 1916, Sanborn Map Co., N.Y. located at the Georgia Historical Society.

Tax Assessment Books, City of Savannah, 1879-1883, 1884. Located at the Georgia Historical Society.

Deed Records, 4 V 368 and the Schreck index to lot 93, Gue Ward, entry 5 J 442 September 1883. Superior Court Record Room, Chatham County Courthouse, Savannah, Georgia. (Note: The 5 J 442 entry in the Schreck index is wrong; they may mean 5 I).

Prepared by: Beth Lattimore Reiter
Project Historian
Historic American Buildings
Survey
August, 1979

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This structure is a two-story, simply appointed double tenement, representing the basic house type built in the Victorian District during the nineteenth century.
2. Condition: Fair. The structure is to be renovated during the winter of 1979.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The two-story structure measures 40'-4" across its five-bay front by 52'-8" deep.
2. Foundations: Brick pier foundations built over a crawl space; newer brick foundations are built under the rear bath additions. Concrete piers are under the rear rooms converted from the porch. Foundations are open at the back and sides of the house.
3. Wall construction and finish: Wood frame with clapboard siding.
4. Structural system: Wood frame construction.
5. Porches, steps: Each unit is fronted by a one-story, two-bay covered stoop, approached from the center of the building by four wooden steps. The stoops are built on brick pier foundations with solid brick infill. The porch on 212 West Henry Street is supported by three turned wooden columns with plain balusters and rails between. The turned columns of 210 West Henry Street have been replaced by plain columns and balusters. The stair railings on each unit are plain. Five concrete steps approach the rear entrance of each unit.
6. Chimneys: Two central stuccoed brick chimneys shared by the units. Smaller central stuccoed chimney is on the rear addition.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways, doors: The front doors are wood with four panels set into plain trim and topped by a two-light transom. 210 West Henry Street has an outer screen door. The rear doors are three-panel frame doors with a three-light panel in the upper half.
- b. Windows: The windows are framed in plain trim. The panes have been replaced numerous times and vary in size, including an arrangement of lights of two-over-two, six-over-six, and two-over-six. Hardware for shutters exist, but no shutters remain.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof is covered with standing seam tin sheathing.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Hidden gutters and bracketed eaves.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: The building consists of two attached side hall plans, with the halls on the outer sides. The houses were originally two rooms deep with a one-story rear porch. This porch has been raised one story, enclosed, and divided into two rooms on both floors. A one-story addition has been built onto the porch at the end of the halls.
2. Stairway: A straight run of stairs with turned spindles is in each unit.
3. Flooring: Painted wooden floors throughout. The floors in the rear halls are covered with linoleum.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The original walls were plaster; some surfaces have subsequently been covered with vertical beaded board paneling and prefinished plywood paneling. The first-floor ceilings of 212 have been covered with a sprayed-on finish.
5. Doorways, doors: Four-paneled sliding pocket doors are between first-floor parlors in each unit. Remaining doors are four-panel frame doors set in simply molded trim.
6. Decorative features and trim: The original wooden mantels are plain with a frieze and vertical pilasters supporting a plain rectangular shelf. In the parlors of 210 and 212 the originals have been replaced by more recent mantels with mirrored overmantels and decorative carved ornament applied to frieze. The top shelf is supported by colonnettes, the lower shelf by brackets. The coal grate opening of 210 is surrounded by yellow tile. The opening of the fireplace in 212 is surrounded by mottled pink tile.

7. Mechanical systems:

- a. Heating: The units were originally heated by fireplaces. Gas space heaters have been used in recent years.
- b. Plumbing: Plumbing was installed after 1898. A cast-iron tub remains in the lower bath of 212.
- c. Lighting: The original gas lighting has been replaced by electricity.

D. Site:

This double tenement is built on the south side of the lot line, facing south. A narrow planting area separates the brick sidewalk from the street.

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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the City of Savannah, the Historic Preservation Section of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation Project, Inc., and Historic Savannah Foundation. The recording project was completed during the summer of 1979 under the general direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS; Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect; Eric Delony, Project Coordinator, Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation Project, Inc.; Beth Lattimore Reiter, Project Historian, Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation Project, Inc.; and Susan Dornbusch, Project Supervisor, University of Virginia; with student architects Gregori Anderson (Howard University), David Fixler (Columbia University), Stephen Lauf (Temple University), and Tamara Peacock (University of Florida), at the HABS Office in Savannah, Georgia. The drawings were edited in the Washington office in September 1979 by architects Susan Dornbusch and Gregori Anderson. The historical and architectural data was reviewed and edited during October-November 1979 by staff historian Jan Cigliano. Photographs were taken in September 1979 by Walter Smalling, a staff photographer with the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. The documentation on the historic district will be used in the rehabilitation of the residences and in developing design guidelines for the area.